

## California State Parks Safety and Survival

A Self-Guided Activity for Junior Rangers

Hiking is a favorite activity for visitors to California State Parks. Trail maps show hiking trails and areas of interest in parks. Contours are lines on maps showing the elevation of the terrain. If contour lines are close together, then the trail is steep and may not be suitable for all hikers. Consider the physical condition of your group and decide the distance and terrain you are prepared to travel.



One item to carry at all times is a whistle. This can be used to alert your family, friends or search-and-rescue people to your location in case you get lost. A whistle can be heard from far away, and it requires less energy than yelling.

Another essential item is water. In areas such as deserts or mountains, the human body needs more water. Drinking 10 cups of water a day is recommended. On a day hike, each person should carry a full canteen of water.

Because hiking burns a lot of calories, a high-energy snack should be packed for nourishment and for emergency use in case you get lost. Trail mix, a granola bar, or peanut butter sandwiches are examples of high-energy foods.

A brightly colored (orange or yellow) trash bag can be used as an emergency shelter to protect you from wind, rain and cold. A bright color is more likely to attract the attention of rescuers. Be sure to put a hole in your trash bag for your face. Layers of clothing are important since weather changes can occur rapidly. Jackets can be tied around your waist when not being worn.



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If you become lost, stay where you are so you will be found as soon as possible. Hugging a tree may help you feel safe while you are waiting to be found. Your parents or search-and-rescuers will look for you in the area you were last seen, so STAY PUT.



What are 5 things you should carry with you on a hike?
If you become lost, what should you do?
Why is it a good idea to hug a tree?
Why should you wear layers of clothing?